

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Government Affairs

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

March 16, 2004

Honorable Olympia J. Snowe
Chairwoman, Committee on Small Business
and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Snowe:

As a longstanding advocate for access to capital for small businesses, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce applauds your leadership in introducing S. 2193, the ***Small Business Loan Revitalization Act of 2004***. The current fiscal year's funding shortfall for the Small Business Administration's (SBA) 7(a) guaranteed lending program has already precipitated major restrictions on lending. With that in mind, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports your legislation that will raise fees on lenders as the framework that will expeditiously provide a short-term solution to fully fund the 7(a) program and provide much needed access to capital for small business owners currently being denied loans.

It is paramount that we foster and encourage robust entrepreneurial activity and small business ownership in order to spur economic prosperity important to our long-term vitality and success as a nation. Restricting access to capital this year to small businesses from the 7(a) program would have an immediate, dramatic, negative impact on the economy and dampen efforts to create jobs. In the long term, the uncertainties of the sizes and numbers of loans available from the program could disrupt current avenues of long-term capital to entrepreneurs willing to invest in starting and growing their businesses.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation, representing more than three million businesses of every size, sector, and region. More than 96 percent of the Chamber's members are small businesses with 100 or fewer employees. On behalf of these small employers, I thank you again for introducing S. 2193, the ***Small Business Loan Revitalization Act of 2004*** and we look forward to working with you on its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten", written in a cursive style.

R. Bruce Josten